



FIRE INVESTIGATOR CERTIFICATION DIRECTIVE

(NFPA 1033 2009 Edition)

Department of Public Safety

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AFSC CERTIFIED FIRE INVESTIGATOR DIRECTIVE

FIRE INVESTIGATOR DIRECTIVE OVERVIEW

The Certified Fire Investigator (CFI) directive was originally designed to provide Alaska fire service agencies with a method to obtain the knowledge and skills necessary to adequately perform fire investigations within their organizations and regions. It was based on the 1998 edition of NFPA 1033 and was developed cooperatively by the Fire Service Training office and the Alaska Association of Fire and Arson Investigators ([AAFAI](#)). In 2010, the AFSC updated the directive to meet the 2009 edition of the [NFPA 1033 Standard, Professional Qualifications for Fire Investigator](#). The intent of the CFI material is to support fire service organizations and ensure that they are investigating post fire incidents in a proficient, professional, and uniform manner throughout the State of Alaska.

LEVELS OF CERTIFICATION

The AFSC Fire Investigator certification directive follows the 2009 edition of NFPA 1033. Two levels of certification are available through this directive and include Certified Fire Investigator (CFI) and Alaska Fire Investigator Technician (AKFIT). Training for the AKFIT certification is available through the completion of 14 core modules accessible through [CFITrainer.net](#). Training for Certified Fire Investigator is typically available through TEB offered courses or other programs accredited by TEB. The AFSC provides certificates for both levels of certification and administers certification examinations for Certified Fire Investigator upon completion of an approved course.

The Alaska Fire Investigator directive has two current levels of certification, and is maintaining an archival directive for Fire Investigator I- Technician recertification during transition to directive updates.

Technician- Level I (Recertification Only):

This directive was originally designed for individuals seeking basic fire cause and determination investigator certification. This level included elements of the 1998 edition of the NFPA 1033 Standard, sections, 3-2.1 to 3.2.6, and some of the elements of sections 3-3, 3-4, 3-5, 3-6 and 3-7. Certification for Technician level I was available through a previous directive. Level I is only supported through recertification, and this level of certification will not be supported after December 31, 2013. Until then, only individuals currently certified as Technician Level I are eligible for recertification at this level. The TEB no longer supports a training program for the Technician level I and the AFSC cannot issue new certification for this level. Personnel that require recertification at this level are strongly encouraged to make the conversion to the AKFIT directive. All certificates at this level will expire on December 31, 2013.

Alaska Fire Investigator Technician (AKFIT):

This directive is designed for individuals seeking basic fire cause and determination investigator certification. This level includes basic elements of the 2009 NFPA 1033 standard and the NFPA 921 guidelines. Applicants for this level of certification must successfully complete the AFSC designated online modules through [CFITrainer.net](#).

Certified Fire Investigator- (Formerly Level II):

This directive is designed for those individuals who are generally assigned the fire investigation responsibilities of their organization. This level includes all requisite elements of 2009 edition of NFPA 1033. Applicants for this certification must meet the AKFIT certification requirements and must complete training to meet knowledge and skill requirements as required within the NFPA 1033 standard.

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AKFIT INITIAL CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

For certification as an Alaska Fire Investigator Technician (AKFIT), an individual must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- a. must be at least 18 years of age; and,
- b. must be an Alaska resident or member of an organized fire department or an emergency response organization registered with the Division of Fire and Life Safety; *and*
- c. must complete the following CFITrainer.net core modules:
 1. Physical Evidence at the Fire Scene
 2. Fire Investigator Scene Safety
 3. The Scientific Method for Fire and Explosion 2009
 4. Digital Photography and the Fire Investigator
 5. Introduction to Evidence
 6. Documenting the Event
 7. Investigating Fatal Fires
 8. Electrical Safety
 9. Ethics and the Fire Investigator
 10. Fundamentals of Interviewing
 11. Fundamentals of Residential Building Construction
 12. The Practical Application of the Relationship Between NFPA 1033 and NFPA 921
 13. Wildland Fire Investigation
 14. Investigating Motor Vehicle Fires
- d. Must complete the [AKFIT Training Record](#) with Chief/Supervisor signature

CERTIFIED FIRE INVESTIGATOR INITIAL REQUIREMENTS

For certification as a Certified Fire Investigator, an individual must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- a. must be at least 18 years of age and have a high school diploma or equivalent; and,
- b. must be an Alaska resident or member of an organized fire department or an emergency response organization registered with the Division of Fire and Life Safety; *and*
- c. must meet the eligibility requirement for the [AKFIT Initial Certification](#); *and*
- d. must be currently active as an investigator in Alaska and have a minimum of 18 months experience as an investigator in Alaska and have investigation duties assigned (*official documentation or letter from Chief or supervisor required*); *and*
- e. must have a minimum of Hazardous Materials Awareness certification (*proof of AFSC certification required*); *and*
- f. must *successfully complete a TEB accredited/approved Certified Fire Investigator course; *and*
- g. must complete an [Application for Certification](#); *and*
- h. must submit 2 (two) fingerprint cards processed by an approved service ([click for Approved Fingerprinters](#)); *and*
- i. must *successfully complete the practical (JPR) requirements and CFI Training Record; *and*
- j. must successfully complete the AFSC CFI final examination (minimum score of 70% and a "Pass" for all test site skills)

* The CFI course requirement *and* the final examination requirement must be completed within **three years** of application date and must meet NFPA 1033 core requirements.

** The AFSC will perform the criminal background check before issuance of final certification. An individual convicted of a felony is not eligible for certification at this level (report is sent to applicant)

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APPROVED CERTIFIED FIRE INVESTIGATOR TRAINING COURSES

For eligibility as a AFSC Certified Fire Investigator an individual must complete a TEB approved training course. A training course may be offered either through an accredited training program with an approved curriculum; or through other courses sponsored or approved by TEB. If an organization is interested in conducting a TEB approved Certified Fire Investigator course that will result in AFSC certification the entity must contact the Training and Education Bureau well in advance of the course start (*minimum of 60 days*). CFI courses that are conducted without prior approval from the TEB and AFSC **will not** be eligible for AFSC certification examinations.

CFI courses are primarily designed to satisfy the knowledge and practical skill requirements of NFPA 1033. The [CFI Practical Skills Evaluation Packet](#) and [Certified Fire Investigator Training Record](#) are utilized for the final examination to ensure the candidate has met the requisite skill requirements before issuance of certification.

The TEB has approved the following courses/programs as meeting minimum core requirements for eligibility to complete the examination for certification:

1. **National Fire Academy Fire/Arson Origin and Cause Investigation (R206)** (*copy of certificate of completion required*)
2. **International Association of Arson Investigators Certified Fire Investigator Program** (*copy of certification required*)
3. **National Association of Fire Investigators Certified Fire and Explosion Investigator Program** (*copy of certification required*)

The above courses meet the training and practical exam requirements for the CFI level.

4. ***Public Agency Training Council's 5-day "Fire/Arson Investigator Academy" Program** (*copy of certification required*)

This course **ONLY meets the academic training requirement. It **DOES NOT** meet the AFSC CFI practical requirement. A candidate that uses this level to request AFSC CFI certification must also submit a Certified Fire Investigator Training Record signed off by a current AFSC approved Certified Fire Investigator, and complete the final examination requirements*

Upon approval to test, an applicant must successfully pass the final examination to receive AFSC CFI certification. The final examination must be completed within 3 years of the completion an accredited/approved course.

CERTIFICATION TIME LINES

Certificates issued under the AFSC Certified Fire Investigator directive have an expiration date. The AFSC uses NFPA 1033, 1.3.7 as a basis for maintaining currency through certification renewal. The AFSC has determined that Alaska fire service personnel should maintain requisite skills associated with fire investigation, and AFSC recertification guidelines were developed to ensure that individuals obtain recurring training related to fire investigation.

All AFSC AKFIT and CFI certificates are valid for a period of 3 calendar years. To recertify, an individual must submit an [Application for Certification](#) and recertification documents prior to the expiration date listed on the individual certificate. Recertification must be complete within one year of expiration or additional recertification requirements must be met. ***The certified individual is ultimately responsible for monitoring his or her certification expiration date.***

The AFSC uses the date of an applicant's initial application for certification to determine the Alaska certificate expiration date. If an applicant submits an approved application for AKFIT or CFI prior to October 1, the

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certificate expiration will be December 31 of the second calendar year. If an applicant takes the exam on or after October 1, the certificate expiration will be December 31 of the third calendar year.

CERTIFICATION THROUGH RECIPROCITY

The AFSC can certify individuals for the AKFIT and Certified Fire Investigator levels through the reciprocity directive. Individuals who have received an IAAI FIT certificate are eligible for reciprocity for the AKFIT certification, provided the IAAI FIT certificate was issued within 3 years of the application date. Applicants seeking reciprocity for FIT must provide a completed [Application for Certification](#) and a copy of his or her IAAI FIT certificate.

Reciprocity for AFSC Certified Fire Investigator is available to an individual who has completed his or her certification through an entity accredited by the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress ([IFSAC](#)) or the National Fire Service Professional Qualifications Board ([ProBoard](#)). CFI reciprocity candidates must provide a completed [Application for Certification](#) and a copy of their IFSAC or ProBoard certificate to the AFSC.

For eligibility to receive CFI reciprocity applicants must:

- a. be an Alaska resident or member of an organized fire department or an emergency response organization registered with the Division of Fire and Life Safety; *and*
- b. must complete an [Application for Certification](#); *and*
- c. provide a copy of a valid Fire Investigator certificate with an IFSAC or ProBoard seal; *and*
- d. meet the eligibility requirement for the AKFIT directive; *and*
- e. be currently active as an investigator in Alaska and have a minimum of 18 months experience as an investigator and have investigation duties assigned (*official documentation or letter from Chief or supervisor required*); *and*
- f. have a minimum of Hazardous Materials Awareness certification (*proof of AFSC certification required*); *and*
- g. **submit 2 (two) fingerprint cards processed by an approved service ([click for Approved Fingerprint Printers](#)); *and*

** The CFI course requirement and the final examination requirement must be completed within **three years** of application date and must meet NFPA 1033 core requirements.*

*** The AFSC will perform the criminal background check before issuance of final certification. An individual convicted of a felony is not eligible for certification at this level (report is sent to applicant)*

Reciprocity certificates issued for Certified Fire Investigator will have an AFSC recertification date based on the original date of issuance, as defined in the AFSC recertification requirements.

For reciprocity applications that have an IFSAC, ProBoard, or IAAI FIT certificate with a date of issuance greater than 3 years prior to the application date, the AFSC certificate will issue an initial certificate that will expire on December 31 of the year a reciprocity certificate was granted. Exceptions to this requirement will only be considered if the reciprocity applicant packet includes clear documentation of 40-hours of continuing education, specific to fire and arson investigation that has been completed within 3-years of the application date.

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FIRE INVESTIGATOR RECERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Technician- Level I Recertification (FINAL expiration date of December 31, 2013)

Individuals with a Technician Level I certificate that is soon to expire, or has recently expired, must complete the following:

- a. an AFSC application (check the "Recertification" box); and,
- b. provide clear documentation of 40-hours of continuing education units (CEU'S), *specific to fire and arson investigation, that has been completed within 3-years of the application date

**Qualifying CEU's include hours accrued through CFITrainer.net, AAFAI conference attendance hours, related TEB course hours, and related NFA course hours. All CEU's must be specific to training and education hours and are subject to AFSC approval.*

Technician Level I recertification for certificates that are expired more than 12 months are not eligible for recertification. An individual must complete all certification requirements for the **AKFIT** certification and an initial AKFIT certificate will be issued (replaces the expired Technician Level I).

Alaska Fire Investigator Technician Recertification (AKFIT)

Individuals with an AKFIT certificate that is soon to expire, or has recently expired, must complete the following:

- a. an AFSC application (check the "Recertification" box); and,
- b. provide clear documentation of 40-hours of continuing education units (CEU'S), *specific to fire and arson investigation, that has been completed within 3-years of the application date

**Qualifying CEU's include hours accrued through CFITrainer.net, AAFAI conference attendance hours, related TEB course hours, and related NFA course hours. All CEU's must be specific to training and education hours and are subject to AFSC approval.*

Individual recertification for certificates that are expired more than 12 months must complete all certification requirements listed for initial AKFIT certification.

Certified Fire Investigator Recertification

Certified individuals with a CFI certificate that is soon to expire, or has recently expired, must complete the following:

- a. an AFSC application (check the "Recertification" box); and,
- b. provide clear documentation of 40-hours of continuing education units (CEU'S), *specific to fire and arson investigation, that has been completed within 3-years of the application date; and,
- c. **must submit 2 (two) fingerprint cards processed by an approved service ([click for Approved Finger Printers](#)).

** Qualifying CEU's include hours accrued through CFITrainer.net, AAFAI conference attendance hours, related TEB course hours, and related NFA course hours. All CEU's must be specific to training and education hours and are subject to AFSC approval.*

*** The AFSC will perform the criminal background check before issuance of final certification. An individual convicted of a felony is not eligible for certification at this level (report is sent to applicant)*

Individual recertification for CFI certificates that are expired **more than 12-months** must complete the following:

- a. complete a Certified Fire Investigator written exam with a minimum score of 70%
- b. an AFSC application (check the "Recertification" box); and,

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- c. provide clear documentation of **60-hours** of continuing education units (CEU'S), *specific to fire and arson investigation, that has been completed within 3-years of the application date; and,
- d. **must submit 2 (two) fingerprint cards processed by an approved service ([click for Approved Finger Printers](#)).

**Qualifying CEU's include hours accrued through [CFITrainer.net](#), AAFAI conference attendance hours, related TEB course hours, and related NFA course hours. All CEU's must be specific to training and education hours and are subject to AFSC approval.*

*** The AFSC will perform the criminal background check before issuance of final certification (an individual convicted of a felony is not eligible for certification at this level)*

CRIMINAL HISTORY BACKGROUND CHECKS

Applicants for Certified Fire Investigator must submit 2 (two) fingerprint cards processed by an approved service ([click for Approved Finger Printers](#)). The AFSC will perform the criminal background check and review applicant criminal history report before issuance of final certification. An individual convicted of a felony is not eligible for certification at this level (report is sent to applicant).

WRITTEN EXAMINATIONS

The Fire Standards Council has developed a written examination test bank for Certified Fire Investigator. The CFI examination has a total of 100 questions. Questions from the test banks are referenced to NFPA 1033 Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Investigator, 2009 edition. Certified Fire Investigator certification examinations are typically administered immediately following a TEB approved CFI course. There is a two-hour time limit for the final written examination.

For individuals who have met the criteria to test for CFI, but are not able to test with a group, a request for examination must be submitted to the AFSC office in writing. Exam distribution procedures shall follow the Test Examination Security Plan specified in the [Certification Policy Manual](#). For regions with reasonable access to TEB training centers, the TEB staff will proctor written examinations. Examinations **shall not** be sent to the individual taking the exam.

For certificate issuance, written examinations must be completed with a score of 70% or higher. The AFSC office will grade all certification examinations and notify the applicant of final scores.

AFSC Written Examination Primary References

- a. NFPA 1033, *Standard for Fire Service Instructor Professional Qualifications*, 2009 Edition
- b. NFPA 921, *Guide for Fire and Explosion Investigations*, 2008 Edition

Upon receipt and verification of the above the AFSC will process the Certified Fire Investigator certificate and mail it to the applicant.

FIRE INVESTIGATOR CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS

Periodically, the AAFAI provides Fire Investigator conferences. The AAFAI generally hosts a number of CFI related workshops and provides documentation to attendees upon completion. In addition, the National Fire Academy and the Alaska State Firefighters Conference host a number of arson investigator related courses/courses. To receive credit for CFI recertification, any CEU's claimed for credit must be clearly documented and certificates of completion or attendance must be included in recertification packets.

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PREVIOUS ALASKA CERTIFIED FIRE INVESTIGATOR CERTIFICATION/GRANDFATHER CERTIFICATION

The Alaska Fire Standards Council recognizes State of Alaska fire investigator certifications that have not expired.

Due to ongoing changes with NFPA fire investigator certification standards the grandfather request for IFSAC seals are limited. For an individual that received Certified Fire Investigator certification prior to initial State of Alaska IFSAC accreditation, **the AFSC policy for "Grandfather" certification with an IFSAC seal will expire after February 28, 2013.**

This clause does not prohibit an individual that was certified in Alaska prior to 2012 from receiving an IFSAC seal. Individual IFSAC seal requests for a certificate issued before 2012 will be required to successfully complete a current written and practical examination before he/she is issued a certificate with an IFSAC seal.